



The Big Shave 2013

small sacrifice - BIG cause



PRESS RELEASE

Charity Headshave – Bald Move for M.E!!

This May 12th-18th is M.E. awareness week and Hampshire resident, 30 year old Amy Hanson, has made the bold decision to shave her head to raise money for two UK myalgic encephalomyelitis (M.E.) charities!

Invest in ME are a charity planning to start the first M.E biomedical research and treatment centre in the U.K. Raising more funds will allow the bio-medical research to begin.

The 25% M.E. Group are a support group for severe M.E. sufferers. Their advocacy service gives support and practical advice. Many advocacy service users have testified about how valuable the service has been and what a difference it has made for them. However the 25% ME Group has just one part time advocacy worker and it simply isn't possible to meet all the demand. Raising more funds would allow the charity to expand the service.

Both charities are run by volunteers, many of whom have M.E. themselves.

Amy says- *"I have suffered from this horrid illness M.E. for over a decade and am mostly housebound and often bed bound. Every year I try and do something in my own little way to raise funds for charity, but when you have severe M.E. you are quite limited in what you can do!*

In the past I've done a sponsored silence and sponsored screen free weekend, as well as giving up Birthday and Christmas money to raise awareness and money for M.E. However, each time that I do, I am very aware that it is only those in the M.E. community or their immediate friends and family who donate. Very rarely does the news travel to the general public. I realised it was going to take something a bit bigger to do this and given that my body won't allow me to bungee jump or parachute jump... sadly, I have made the bold or should I say bald decision to shave my hair off to raise money for charity!

Very drastic I know, especially as a female, however I hope this small sacrifice will show my dedication to the causes I hold dear, as well as the desperate longing to see my friends and myself recover from this horrific illness that is destroying our lives."

Prestigious Winchester salon, Guy Kremers are taking part in the event by shaving Amy's head for the cause!

This will happen on Monday 13th May at 3 p.m. at their salon in Parchment Street, Winchester.

Guy Kremer is a multi award winner including British Hairdresser of the Year, and who has styled the likes of X Factor Contestants, TOWIE, Sugarbabes, Tess Daly, Fearne Cotton and Claudia Winkleman.

- Myalgic encephalomyelitis (M.E.) is a neurological illness – classified by the World Health Organisation since 1969.
- Myalgic = muscle pain. Encephalomyelitis = inflammation of the brain and spinal cord.
- M.E. may be relapsing and remitting.
- M.E. patients are banned for life from giving blood.
- M.E. is thought to be 3 times more prevalent than HIV/AIDS and twice as prevalent as MS.
- M.E. can vary in severity from mild, moderate, severe and very severe.
- Around a quarter of M.E. patients are severely affected (hence 25% M.E Group).
- At its most extreme, people with M.E. may be totally bedbound, in constant pain, unable to tolerate light or sound, and unable to speak or swallow.
- Approximately 25,000 M.E. patients in UK are children.
- M.E. patients have no approved drugs for treatment.
- M.E. patients have no NHS access to specialist M.E. consultants.
- M.E. does not discriminate, anyone can be affected.
- There is no dedicated centre of excellence in the UK that treats and researches M.E. as a physical illness.

"[ME/CFS patients] feels effectively the same every day as an AIDS patient feels two months before death; the only difference is that the symptoms can go on for never-ending decades." — Prof. Mark Loveless, Head of the AIDS and ME/CFS Clinic at Oregon Health Sciences University

People donating to the 'The Big Shave 2013' can choose which of the charities to donate to, or can donate to both.

Several other M.E. sufferers around the country are joining in by shaving their heads to raise funds.

Updates will be posted on the website and social networking sites leading up to the big event.

More info at:

www.thebigshave2013.org

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